

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-6 and 17-26 are presently active in this case. Claim 1 and 3-6 are amended, Claims 17-26 are added, and Claims 7-16 are cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer by the present amendment. Applicants respectfully note that Claims 3-6 are amended only to correct minor informalities.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1, 2, and 6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over the admitted prior art (herein “APA”) in view of DE 23 21 401 Abstract. While the Office Action at page 3 lists the secondary reference as DE 23 21 401, Applicants respectfully note that the reference listed on the PTO-892 form enclosed with the outstanding Office Action is DE 24 21 401. Thus, the following remarks are directed to DE 24 21 401, (herein “401 Abstract”). Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over the references as applied to Claim 1 and further in view of Underwood (U.S. Patent No. 3,220,812, herein “Underwood”). Claim 4 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over the references as applied to Claim 3 and further in view of Kurihara, et al (U.S. Patent No. 6,132,661, herein “Kurihara”). Claim 5 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over the references as applied to Claim 1 and further in view of Weber, et al. (U.S. Patent No 3,959,421 herein “Weber”), or Kurihara. For the reasons discussed below, Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of the rejection of Claim 1 based on APA in view of ‘401 Abstract.

Amended Claim 1 is directed to a method of manufacturing a transversely aligned web including a step of preparing at least one air stream vibrating means for cyclically changing a flowing direction of a high-speed fluid blown from a high-speed fluid blowing unit toward a direction cross to a machine direction of a conveyor. Further, the air stream

vibration means includes *a wall surface of which a distance and a direction against the high-speed fluid cyclically changes*. Support for the amendment can be found at least at FIGs. 2a - 2c. Thus, no new matter is added.

In a non-limiting exemplary embodiment, FIGs. 2a - 2c illustrate a change in the flowing direction of filaments 4 due to a rod-like body 7. In the state shown in FIG. 2a, a major axis 7c of the rod-like body 7 is approximately parallel with an air stream axis 9 of the high air stream, and a distance between a circumferential surface 7b of the rod-like body 7 and an air stream axis 9 is at a maximum. When the rod-like body 7 rotates to an exemplary position illustrated in FIG. 2b, a distance between the circumferential surface 7b of the rod-like body 7 and the air stream axis 9 decreases. Additionally, a *direction* of the circumferential surface 7b with respect to the air stream axis 9 changes as the rod-like body 7 rotates. As the rod-like body 7 further rotates to the exemplary state illustrated in FIG. 2c, the distance between the circumferential surface 7b and rod-like body 7 and air stream axis 9 reaches a minimum. Further, as the rod-like body 7 continues to rotate, the direction of the surface 7b with respect to the air stream axis 9 changes (see Specification at page 14, line 4 through page 16, line 2).

The Office Action at page 3 notes that the APA does not disclose providing at least one air stream vibrating means for cyclically changing the flowing direction of high speed air streams to change the movement of the filaments across the machine direction of the conveyor. To that end, the Office Action provides '401 Abstract', which teaches curved shells 1, 2 on either side of the filament and carrier streams which are moved alternately from side to side to deflect the streams on either side of the central line.

Although '401 Abstract' teaches side to side movement of the curved shells 1, 2 in lateral directions P (see FIGs. 1a and 1b of '401 Abstract'), '401 Abstract' does not teach or suggest that the curved shells 1, 2 include a wall surface of which *a distance and a direction*

with respect to the high-speed fluid cyclically changes, as claimed by Applicants. The curved shells 1, 2 are taught to move laterally only along an axis P, thereby changing a distance with respect to the central line. However, by only translating laterally, the curved shells 1, 2 do not change in a *direction* against the high-speed fluid. Therefore, '401 Abstract' does not teach or suggest all limitations of Applicants amended Claim 1.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of the rejection of Claim 1 and Claims 2 and 6 dependent therefrom based on APA in view of '401 Abstract'.

Furthermore, with the regard to the rejection of Claims 3-5 based on secondary references Underwood, Kurihara, and Weber, it is respectfully submitted that not one of the secondary references remedies the deficiencies noted with regard to '401 Abstract'. In particular, Applicants note that Underwood, Kurihara, and Weber all fail to teach at least an air stream vibration means including a wall surface of which *a distance and a direction* against the high-speed fluid cyclically changes. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejections of Claims 3-5 be withdrawn.

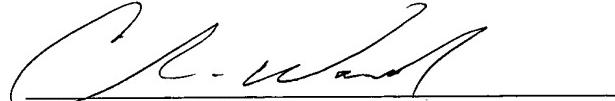
Dependent Claims 17-18 are considered allowable for the reasons advanced for Claims 1 and 6 from which they respectfully depend. These claims are further considered allowable as they recite other features of the invention that are not disclosed, taught, or suggested by the applied reference when those features are considered within the context of independent Claims 1 and 6. Support for the new claims can be found at least at page 38, lines 1-10 and at FIG. 1. Thus, no new matter is added.

New independent Claim 19 is added to correspond to the allowable subject matter noted in the Office Action at page 6, section 7. Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter. Accordingly, new Claim 19 and Claims 20-26 dependent therefrom are considered allowable.

Consequently, in view of the above discussion, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for formal allowance, and an early and favorable reconsideration of this application is therefore requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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